

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 24, 2003. Claims 1 to 8, 10 to 19 and 26 to 37 are in the application, of which Claims 1 and 2 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 2, 5 to 8 and 11 to 18, as confirmed in a telephone conversation with the Examiner on March 19, 2003. These claims were merely objected to for their dependency on a rejected base claim. In keeping with this indication, Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form to contain all features of the base claim. In addition, Claims 26 to 37 have been added to depend from Claim 2. These new claims contain language similar to that found in the original dependent claims. Consequently, Claims 2 and 26 to 37 are seen to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 3, 9 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over JP 59-018576 (Katsumi). Claims 1, 4, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Katsumi. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

According to Claim 1, the present invention relates to a rechargeable lithium battery which comprises a single main body for a battery comprising at least a cathode, an anode, and an ion conductor enclosed between a pair of a sealing member (a) and a sealing member (b). At least the sealing member (a) has a concave portion such that the concave portion is extended to either side of the sealing member (a) from a central position of the sealing member (a) so as to have a peripheral portion which surrounds the concave portion.

The two sealing members (a) and (b) are arranged to oppose to each other such that the face of the concave portion of the sealing member (a) is faced to the sealing member (b) through the single battery main body. This is characterized in that the sealing member (a) has a peripheral collar portion (a-i) at the peripheral portion of the concaved portion and the sealing member (b) has a peripheral collar portion (b-i) at a region thereof. The peripheral collar portion (b-i) corresponds to the peripheral portion of the sealing member (a) wherein the collar portion (a-i) and the collar portion (b-i) are mutually welded. Either the sealing member (a) or the sealing member (b) is provided with a power output terminal having electrical continuity with the cathode of the single battery main body. The rechargeable lithium battery also includes a power output terminal having electrical continuity with the anode of the single battery main body and an insulating portion for insulating the power output terminals.

As Applicants understand the applied art, it is not seen to teach or suggest the features of Claim 1, and particularly is not seen to teach or suggest at least the feature of a single battery main body.

Katsumi is seen to disclose a battery system that provides different voltages, and consequently uses multiple battery bodies to provide these voltages. For example, in Figure 1 of Katsumi, it can be seen that the device consists of two battery main bodies within the sealing can, so as to provide two different voltages. Likewise, Katsumi's Figure 2 shows three battery main bodies to provide these different voltages. Modifying Katsumi to contain only a single battery main body is seen to defeat the purpose of Katsumi, since the device would no longer be able to provide different voltages. Thus, the modification of Katsumi to contain only a single battery main body would not have been obvious to one

skilled in the art. See MPEP §2143.01 (the proposed modification cannot change the principle of operation of a reference).

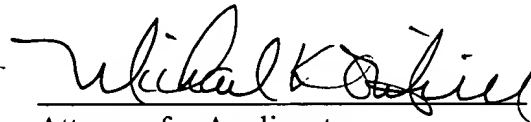
In view of the foregoing, the Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 3 to 6 and 10 to 19 are each dependent from Claim 1, discussed above, and are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reason. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

Consequently, the application is seen to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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